

Rufus Jesse and Alice May Speer Stice

1850-1950 Centennial Biography

Rufus Jesse Stice was born September 4, 1873 near Memphis, Missouri, the son of Phillip Stice and Eliza Ann Humphry. He was reared on a farm and went to school two miles away.

At the age of sixteen, he and his schoolmate, Ora Byrne, decided to learn telegraphy as an occupation. They went to New York for telegraphy equipment and started learning together, one sending the other receiving. After finishing his schooling, Rufus studied one year as an apprentice, without pay for a railroad agent at Memphis, Missouri.

His first practice as operator was for the Keokuk and Western Railroad. In July, 1900, he came west and found a position with the Union Pacific.

Alice May Speer was born August 18, 1877 at Lancaster, Missouri, daughter of Franklin M. Speer and Rada Isabelle Lunceford. When she was thirteen, her parents moved to the vicinity of Memphis, Missouri, where they became neighbors of the Stice family and Rufus and Alice became acquainted.

The Speer family moved back to Iowa where Alice continued her schooling and music. At the age of eighteen, she was clerk in the post office and the General Merchandise store. Later she taught school and music. Meanwhile she corresponded with Rufus. On his way west, he called upon her and they became engaged. Later he persuaded her to join him and they were married in Omaha, Nebraska, November 12, 1900.

They first went to Granger, Wyoming, where he was employed for one year. At that time, he intended to return to Iowa, but decided to visit Salt Lake City, where he was offered a position with the Union Pacific, and was sent to

Eureka. Later he was transferred to Milford, Utah, and finally to Lehi in 1905, as agent and operator.

At Lehi, they became interested in the Latter-Day Saint Church, and after a thorough investigation, were converted and baptized members of the Church. They made their first visit to the Salt Lake Temple in 1912, and thereafter did considerable genealogical research and temple work.

They were transferred from Lehi, to Tooele, Utah and later to American Fork, where he served for 23 years and from which place he was retired, October 11, 1938. They came back to Lehi to make their home, where Mr. Stice died June 8, 1943. They were parents of six children: Rufus Boyd, Wilma Isabelle, Earl Kendell, Eva Pearl, Harold Kenneth, and Virgil Eli. They also have sixteen grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

In 1947, Alice served a short-term mission to Southern California.